

REMARKS

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Final Office Action mailed April 25, 2008, which has been reviewed and carefully considered. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the amendments made above and the remarks to follow are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-19 remain in this application, where claims 10-19 have been added.

By means of the present amendment, the current Abstract has been deleted and substituted with the enclosed New Abstract which better conforms to U.S. practice. Further, the specification has been amended to correct certain informalities.

By means of the present amendment, claims 2-4 and 7 have been amended for non-statutory reasons, such as for better form including beginning the dependent claims with 'The' instead of 'A', and changing "characterized in that" to --wherein--. Such amendments to claims 2-4 and 7 were not made in order to address issues of patentability and Applicants respectfully reserve all rights under the Doctrine of Equivalents.

In the Office Action, claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 7,136,817 (Schroder) in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,050,971 (Kaufholz). It is respectfully submitted that claims 1-19 are patentable Schroder and Kaufholz for at least the following reasons.

Schroder is directed to voice control of a device where voices of users are characterized to distinguish or identify the speech inputs of different users. This enables the device to recognize and respond only to a particular user. Schroder uses user profiles to distinguish or identify the speech inputs of different users.

Kaufholz is directed to a speech recognition apparatus having multiple audio inputs to cancel background noise. An audio cancellation module produces a speech signal by canceling two of the independent audio source signals from a microphone signal. As recited on column 5, lines 10-17, the loudest source signal is identified, and this source signal is tracked among the various microphone input signals.

It is respectfully submitted that Schroder, Kaufholz and combination thereof, do not teach or suggest the present invention as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in

independent claim 9 which, amongst other patentable elements, recites (illustrative emphasis provided):

wherein the recognition of the predetermined keyword at the second orientation calibrates the beam forming module to follow the user from the first orientation to the second orientation so that the subsequent utterance originating from the second orientation are accepted; and

wherein the subsequent utterance originating from the second orientation will be discarded if not preceded by the recognition of the predetermined keyword originating from the second orientation.

Discarding utterance if not preceded by recognition of a predetermined keyword is nowhere disclosed or suggested in Schroder and Kaufholz, alone or in combination. Rather, Schroder merely discloses to identify or distinguish user based on user profiles, and not based on any predetermined keywords, while Kaufholz discloses tracking the loudest source signal.

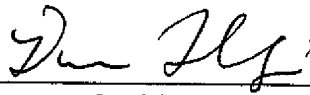
Based on the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 9 are patentable over Schroder and Kaufholz, and notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. Claims 2-8 and 10-19 respectively depend from one of claims 1 and 9 and accordingly are allowable for at least this reason as well as for the separately patentable elements contained in each of said

claims. Accordingly, separate consideration of each of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

In addition, Applicant denies any statement, position or averment of the Examiner that is not specifically addressed by the foregoing argument and response. Any rejections and/or points of argument not addressed would appear to be moot in view of the presented remarks. However, the Applicant reserves the right to submit further arguments in support of the above stated position, should that become necessary. No arguments are waived and none of the Examiner's statements are conceded.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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